

# Management Decision

## Management Area 1 Medicine Lodge

The Medicine Lodge Management Area contains 168,678 acres of public land, of which the majority is well-blocked. The area rises to the north and west and peaks at the Continental Divide on the Montana/Idaho state line. The highest elevation in the resource area occurs on Red Conglomerate Peak at 10,106 feet. There is considerable perennial water in the area and the major resource uses are livestock forage and wildlife habitat. The area has higher precipitation and more production potential than public lands that lie to the south and southeast at lower elevations.

The area contains industrial grade limestone, travertine building stone and bentonite clays.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 162,289 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 5,920 acres in the northwest corner of the area classed as a Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized. About 187 acres are withdrawn from the timber base because of site capability.
  - c. Classified for Transfer: 280 acres of isolated tracts.
2. Retain a public land base of 168,398 acres for long term management in federal ownership.
3. Manage 176,900 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development with consideration being given for wildlife, water and water quality and riparian use.
4. Manage 1,184 acres of commercial forest land for timber production according to current silvicultural practices. Manage 1,347 acres of woodland while maintaining or improving wildlife habitat.
5. Manage 162,939 acres for grazing. Improve 26,225 acres of fair condition range to good. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 5,318 AUMs over existing use levels through range improvement and better distribution.
6. Provide forage and cover for existing and projected wildlife numbers. Maintain or improve at least 75% of all terrestrial wildlife habitat in satisfactory condition.
7. Improve water quality from poor to fair on approximately 11 miles of stream in the area.
8. Continue to manage for dispersed recreation opportunities in the area.

9. Manage 22,700 acres as limited fire suppression and the remaining 145,978 acres as full suppression.
10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

#### Management Decisions

1. Examine 280 acres of public land, applying the standard operating procedures, for sale, state or private exchange (Map 3b). Utilities will be limited to existing corridors where possible.
2. None of the lands will be closed to mineral leasing and only 160 acres closed to mining claim location. A total of 31,900 acres are open to leasing under seasonal occupancy restrictions and 12,500 acres under no surface occupancy. The majority of the area, 132,500 acres, is open to mineral leasing and exploration with standard stipulations. The majority is available for sale of mineral materials with only 14,900 acres closed to protect other values.
3. Timber sales can be held on 1,184 acres with 189 acres withdrawn from sales to protect elk winter range and calving areas, predominately in the West Fork of Irving Creek and Patetzick Creek areas. An additional 1,347 acres of woodland will be managed for production of forest products with measures to maintain or improve mountain mahogany for wildlife uses.
4. Of the 25 grazing allotments, reductions will be made in four of the allotments and in increase on one allotment. For the management area as a whole, the initial stocking rate of 28,763 is above the 5 year average, but less than active preference. Long term stocking is essentially the same as active grazing preference.

Proposed improvements include 18,200 acres brush control, 1,500 acres seeding, 12 springs, 2 wells, 14.5 miles of pipeline, 18 reservoirs, and 51.5 miles of fence.

5. An HMP will be developed for the Edie Creek Bench for about 168,700 acres. Objectives of the HMP will be to improve deer, antelope, sage grouse, and moose habitat. Vegetation manipulation will be accomplished through controlled burning and as a result of livestock grazing adjustments.
6. A Water Quality Management Plan will be developed for Indian Creek and one for Edie and Irving Creeks. Actions will likely include fencing of some riparian areas, drift or trail fencing and some improved livestock distribution measures.
7. There will be 5,920 acres closed to ORV use and an additional 6,720 acres with a seasonal restriction on ORV use. Two campgrounds will be developed.
8. A fire management plan for about 22,700 acres will be developed for limited fire suppression.

# Management Area 2

## Table Butte/Twin Buttes

This management area is composed of two well-blocked areas of public land totaling 156,561 acres west of Interstate 15. One block is north of Mud Lake and the other is south. The areas are both important for livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. Farming in the area has increased the demand for lands with agricultural potential and several Desert Land Applications have been filed in the District Office.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 153,366 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were placed in this class.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: 680 acres classed as transfer by sale or exchange, 1,395 acres having DLE applications and 1,120 acres having soils potential for agricultural development. A total of 3,195 acres will be considered for transfer out of federal ownership.
2. Retain 153,366 acres of land in public ownership for long term multiple use management.
3. Manage 161,100 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development.
4. Manage 154,664 acres of public land for grazing purposes. Manage 27,436 acres which lie within the Big Butte Resource Area for grazing purposes. Improve 15,880 acres of range land from poor or fair range condition to good range condition. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 3,167 AUMs over existing use levels.
5. Provide forage and cover for existing and projected wildlife numbers. Improve 10 percent or 4,000 acres of unsatisfactory antelope and sage grouse habitat. Maintain a suitable prey base for 35 bald eagles and 75 golden eagles. Provide foraging habitat adjoining a peregrine falcon reintroduction site in the Buck Springs area.
6. Manage fire on a limited suppression basis on 101,076 acres and full suppression on 55,489 acres.
7. Reduce archaeological site vandalism and manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and scientific uses.

### Management Decisions

1. Examine 680 acres of public land for sale, private or state exchange, act on 1,395 acres under DLE application, and examine 1,120 acres of public land where soil is suitable for farming. Land disposals will meet the criteria outlined in the standard operating procedures.

2. None of the lands will be closed to mineral leasing. About 400 acres will be open to leasing under no surface occupancy restrictions and 39,100 acres will be open under seasonal restrictions. Only 80 acres will be closed to mining and 1,300 closed to sales of mineral materials.
3. Reductions in grazing use will be made in four allotments, with increases in three allotments. The initial stocking rate of 18,613 is below active preference but more than the 5 year average active use. Long term grazing available is expected to exceed the active preference. About 27,436 acres of the Twin Buttes allotment is located in the Big Butte Resource Area but managed along with this area. Proposed improvements include 12,800 acres of brush control, 2,880 acres seeding, 1 spring, 9 wells, 2.5 miles of pipeline, 1 reservoir, and 4.75 miles of fence.
4. Develop a monitoring plan that will ensure maintenance of a suitable prey base for bald eagles, golden eagles and peregrine falcons. Monitoring is also needed to ensure maintenance of antelope fawning and winter range and sage grouse habitat.
5. Most of the area will be managed for limited fire suppression and a fire management plan will be completed. About 55,489 acres would be managed under full suppression.

## Management Area 3 Camas Creek

This management area presents a fragmented and scattered pattern of 59,480 acres of public land in the area east of Dubois north to the Targhee Forest boundary. The majority of the area consists of private and state lands with public lands in the minority. There are important range resources and key elk calving, riparian, big game winter range and upland game habitat.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 58,680 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were placed in this class.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: 800 acres classed as transfer by sale or exchange. Area has potential for state exchange actions.
2. Retain 58,680 acres of land in public ownership for long term multiple use management.
3. Manage 74,700 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development, primarily oil and gas and sand and gravel.
4. Intensively manage 1,788 acres for timber production and 1,242 acres of woodland.
5. Manage 50,017 acres for livestock grazing, improve distribution, improve 2,875 acres from fair to good range condition, and increase livestock forage by 310 AUMs in 20 years.

6. Maintain satisfactory habitat in key elk calving areas (especially in the Antelope Ridge area), antelope fawning areas and big game winter range. Provide suitable habitat for upland game on the scattered tracts.
7. Improve 1.5 miles of riparian vegetation on 3 Mile Creek.
8. Continue to manage for dispersed recreation opportunities and manage 1,540 acres as semi-primitive motorized.
9. Manage 58,680 acres as full fire suppression.
10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

#### Management Decisions

1. Examine 800 acres of public land for sale or private or state exchanges. Where possible and feasible, improvement in management will be a key factor in disposal of public lands in this management area.
2. No areas will be closed to mineral leasing or mining claim location and only 1,800 acres will be closed to sale of mineral materials. Seasonal restrictions apply to 8,200 acres in the unit and 800 acres are restricted to no surface occupancy for mineral leasing and exploration.
3. Timber sales can be held on 1,788 acres of public land near the Targhee National Forest boundary, predominately in the Antelope Valley area and Kilgore area. Most of the sales will use select cut methods with only 124 acres clear cut in small blocks.
4. Reductions in grazing use will be made in 5 allotments and an increase in one allotment. Most of these actions will be in the smaller individual allotments. For the management area as a whole, the initial level of 9,066 AUMs is below the active preference of 9,285 AUMs, but more than the 5 year average of 8,422 AUMs. In the long term, the grazing level for active use is expected to be about the same as total grazing preference. Proposed improvements include 2,875 acres of brush control, 1 spring, 5 wells, 5.5 miles of pipeline, 5 reservoirs, and 11.5 miles of fence.
5. Develop a monitoring plan to ensure that habitat is satisfactory in key elk calving areas (predominately in Antelope Ridge), antelope fawning areas and big game winter range.
6. The 1.5 miles on 3 Mile Creek will be monitored to ensure improvements in water quality and riparian habitat.
7. The 1,540 acres designated for semi-primitive motorized use will be monitored periodically to ensure maintenance of outdoor recreation values.
8. Develop and implement a cultural resource management plan to protect and manage the areas prehistoric and historic sites.

# Management Area 4 Scattered Tracts

Management Area 4 consists of a variety of isolated tracts totaling 28,627 acres of public land. These tracts of land are scattered throughout the resource area. This management area provides livestock forage, wildlife habitat, timber production, and contains the Victor municipal watershed.

## Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 23,879 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 1,380 acres on the Idaho-Wyoming state line, which is the Victor municipal watershed.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: 3,328 acres for transfer by sale or exchange.
2. Retain 25,259 acres of public land in public ownership to be managed for long term multiple use.
3. Manage 95,570 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development.
4. Manage 3,623 acres of commercial forest land for timber production according to current silvicultural practices. Manage 3,203 acres of woodland to meet local demand with consideration being given to wildlife and watershed needs where these are important.
5. Manage 18,880 acres for grazing purposes. Continue to keep 1,380 acres on the Victor watershed closed to livestock grazing. Improve 600 acres of fair condition range to good. Increase stocking levels in the long term by 90 AUMs over existing use levels.
6. Provide forage and cover for existing numbers of wildlife and maintain or enhance upland game habitat.
7. Continue to manage the area for dispersed recreation with 945 acres closed to winter and early spring ORV use and 375 acres in the Game Creek area completely closed to ORVs.
8. Improve or maintain water quality, fisheries and riparian habitat on 7.4 miles of stream.
9. Manage 28,627 acres of public lands under full fire suppression.

## Management Decisions

1. Examine 3,288 acres for transfer from BLM jurisdiction through sale, private exchange or state exchange. Examine 200 acres for public purposes or exchange and examine 80 acres for their suitability for agricultural entry. Transfer of public lands will meet the criteria listed in the standard operating procedures.

2. Mining, mineral leasing and mining claim locations will essentially continue as they are being handled at present with no changes.
3. About 466 acres is withdrawn from the commercial forest land base for T&E species and other multiple uses. About 1,750 acres can be clear cut in small blocks and an additional 1,873 acres select cut. The timber is principally in the "Donut Hole" and areas adjacent to the Targhee National Forest. An additional 3,203 acres of woodland can be made available for sales of forest products to meet local and regional demand.
4. Reductions in the level of grazing use will be made in 6 allotments. All of the reductions are in small allotments of less than 100 AUMs with one exception: the Victor allotment. The initial stocking rate of 405 AUMs is quite similar to the 5 year average use of 425 AUMs, but less than the preference of 816 AUMs. For this management area as a whole, initial levels of grazing use total 3,813 AUMs, which is somewhat more than the 5 year average but less than active preference. Proposed improvements include 1,360 acres of brush control, 25 acres seeding, 2 springs, 2 wells, 3 reservoirs, and 4.75 miles of fence.
5. Manage 1.2 miles of Game Creek to improve riparian habitat and improve water quality. Monitor 6.2 miles of stream to ensure maintenance of existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality.
6. About 350 acres will be closed to ORV use near Henry's Lake and seasonal restrictions on ORV use will be enforced in the area near Monida Pass.
7. Designate 375 acres in Game Creek as a Research Natural Area. No changes in vegetation will be allowed in the RNA.

## Management Area 5 Sands

This management area includes 187,431 acres of the Sands Habitat Management Area. The 21,100 acres in Area 6 is also included in the Sands HMP area which totals 208,531 acres. A primary consideration for the area is maintenance of critical elk winter range with important winter range for deer and moose as well. The Sands HMP includes multiresource planning objectives and these objectives carry over into this RMP. Livestock grazing and recreation are important in the area.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 176,973 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 10,500 acres within the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: Area has potential for state exchange actions. There are 80 acres with soil potential for agriculture classed as potentially suitable for transfer.
2. Retain 187,431 acres of public land in federal ownership and manage for multiple use values.

3. Manage 215,560 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development.
4. Intensively manage 4,253 acres for timber production.
5. Manage 169,910 acres for grazing and improve livestock distribution. Improve 27,000 acres in poor or fair condition to good condition, and increase available livestock forage by 1,042 AUMs over the next 20 years.
6. Manage wildlife habitat for elk, deer and moose in accordance with the Sands HMP.
7. Reduce archaeological site vandalism and manage cultural resources for management and potential scientific uses.
8. Intensively manage the sand dunes for ORV use as a Special Recreation Management Area in conjunction with Management Area 6. Manage remainder of area for dispersed recreation opportunities.
9. Improve 2 miles of Sand Creek from very poor to good condition.
10. Manage 90,000 acres as limited fire suppression and 97,000 acres as full suppression.

#### Management Decisions

1. Both state and private exchanges will be encouraged in order to improve the pattern of private, state and public land in the management area. Land examinations would be needed for all feasible exchange opportunities and transfers under agricultural entry.
2. Mineral leasing, material sales and locatable minerals actions will be the same as the present situation. For maintenance of important wildlife habitat areas, most of the area will have continued seasonal occupancy restrictions for mineral leasing, 4,340 acres can be leased under no surface occupancy and 2,160 acres will be closed to leasing. About 1,140 acres are closed to mining claim location and 11,000 acres closed to sale of mineral materials.
3. Timber sales can be conducted on 3,623 acres, predominately in areas adjacent to the Yale-Kilgore road and in the Pine Creek-July Creek areas. Only 78 acres are withdrawn from the commercial forest base for bald eagle nesting and other multiple uses. The majority can be clear cut in small blocks with about 1,524 acres by selective cut methods. About 3,203 acres of woodland will be managed for production of forest products on demand with stipulations to maintain wildlife habitat and watershed conditions.
4. For this management area as a whole, the initial stocking level for livestock is slightly more than active preference and also above the 5 year average. However, reductions in livestock grazing will be made in 4 allotments and increases in 7 allotments. Proposed improvements include 24,670 acres of brush control, 80 acres seeding, 2 springs, 15 wells, 5 reservoirs, and 27.25 miles of fence.



5. Continue to manage and monitor wildlife habitat under terms of the Sands Habitat Management Plan. If the Sands HMP is revised, the area will continue to be managed to maintain wildlife habitat as specified in the revised HMP.
6. Improve 1 mile of Sand Creek through fencing and 1 mile through livestock management. Maintain existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality on 12.8 miles. Periodic monitoring will be needed to ensure improvement and maintenance.
7. A management plan will be developed for the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area, a portion of which is in Management Area 6. The dunes will be managed for ORV use. A total of 2,560 acres are closed to ORVs and a seasonal closure on ORVs on 15,800 acres will be enforced.
8. This resource management plan designates the Nine Mile Knoll Area of Critical Environmental concern (see Map 3b) which will be managed according to an ACEC management plan. Constraints in use of the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC include no disposal of public land, no new roads or major R/Ws, a winter vehicle closure, and seasonal occupancy for O&G exploration and development. The St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area will also be managed under a specific management plan consistent with the objectives for this management area and the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC management plan. (Refer to Management Area 6). There are 1,780 acres designated in the North Junipers as a Research Natural area. No changes in vegetation will be allowed in this RNA.
9. Develop a Cultural Resources Management Plan. The plan will include detailed management and provide for monitoring of site conditions. The plan will be implemented upon completion.

## Management Area 6 Sand Mountain

The 21,100 acre area is located in the middle of the Sands Habitat Management Area. This area west of St. Anthony consists of the Sand Mountain Wilderness Study Area. The most important considerations in the area are recreational use, wilderness and wildlife winter range. It is a separate management unit because of its status as a WSA.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: No acres were placed in this class.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 21,100 acres.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.
2. Retain 21,100 acres of public land in federal ownership for long term multiple use management.
3. Manage 21,100 acres for mineral and energy exploration and development.
4. Manage 16,366 acres for livestock grazing to improve 1,800 acres from fair to good condition, improve livestock distribution and increase livestock forage by 126 AUMs over existing levels after 20 years. Management will be consistent with the Sands HMP.

5. Manage critical elk winter range consistent with the objectives of the Sands HMP, including deer and moose winter range. Provide winter vehicle closures to protect wintering elk under an ACEC management plan.
6. Manage the Sand Mountain area to promote the most appropriate designation, management and use of the area for recreation consistent with the objectives of the Sands HMP.
7. Manage 21,100 acres as full fire suppression.

#### Proposed Management Decisions

1. All of this area would be open to sales of mineral materials, mining claim location and also open to mineral leasing with seasonal restrictions provided that Congress and the President accept the recommendation as non-suitable for this WSA. Until Congress acts, the area will be managed under the Bureau's Interim Management Policy, essentially closed to new mineral leases or developments. No new mineral actions can be allowed until Congress acts.
2. Of the three grazing allotments in this management area, a reduction will be made in one allotment. The area will be monitored periodically to ensure proper use of the range resource. Proposed improvements include 1,600 acres of brush control, 200 acres seeding, 2 wells, 1 mile of pipeline, and 3 miles of fence.
3. Since this management area is included in the Sands Habitat Management Plan already completed, wildlife habitat will be managed and monitored under terms of that plan as described for Management Area 5.
4. A management plan will be developed for the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area, a portion of which is located in Area 5. The dunes will be managed for ORV use, consistent with the Sands HMP. If part of the dunes are designated a National Natural Landmark, this factor will be considered in the management plan. Two campgrounds will be developed to accommodate ORV use. About 21,100 acres are closed to ORV use during the winter in connection with the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC. There are about 31,600 acres in the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC, of which 21,100 acres are located in Management Area 6.
5. This resource management plan designates the Nine Mile Knoll ACEC which will be managed according to an ACEC management plan (refer to Area 5, Management Decisions). The St. Anthony Sand Dunes SRMA will be designated and managed consistent with that ACEC management plan.
6. Recommend the Sand Mountain WSA as nonsuitable for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. If the Sand Mountain WSA is not designated wilderness, it will be managed as part of an ACEC and SRMA. Detailed management plans will be developed for both areas. Other management prescriptions are listed in items 1-5 above.

If the WSA is designated wilderness, it would be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy. Specific management provisions would be formulated in a wilderness management plan developed for the Sand Mountain Area.

# **Management Area 7**

## **Idaho National Engineering Laboratory**

This management area includes 140,415 acres of the eastern portion of the INEL (125,036 acres are withdrawn public land and 15,379 acres acquired by DOE). Grazing occurs on 135,802 acres in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area and on 44,617 acres of INEL within the Big Butte Resource Area. Dominant resource uses are livestock grazing and wildlife habitat.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: No acres were classified as moderate use, because the area is under a withdrawal and BLM has limited management authority.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 140,415 acres, all within the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL).
  - c. Classified for Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.
2. Manage 125,040 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral and energy exploration and development in coordination with DOE.
3. Manage 180,419 acres of the INEL in Medicine Lodge and Big Butte Resource Areas for livestock grazing. Improve livestock distribution and improve range condition from poor and fair to good on 13,000 acres. Increase livestock forage by 4,177 AUMs over existing levels after 20 years.
4. Maintain satisfactory habitat for antelope and sage grouse, including strutting and nesting areas and winter range.
5. Manage cultural resources for potential scientific uses.

### Management Decisions

1. At the present time, about 125,040 acres in the Medicine Lodge Resource Area portion of the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL) are closed to mineral leasing and mining claim location, and 56,520 acres are closed to sale of mineral materials. Following the review of the INEL withdrawal, 106,840 acres will be opened for mineral leasing and the 125,040 acres opened for sales of mineral materials.
2. No reductions are needed in the Twin Buttes allotment, which includes part of the INEL in the Big Butte Resource Area. Proposed improvements include 8,000 acres of brush control, 5,000 acres seeding, 2 wells, and 2 reservoirs.

# Management Area 8

## Willow Creek/ Tex Creek

The Tex Creek/Willow Creek area contains 11,490 acres of public land. This management area follows the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Willow Creek 208 Project boundary and includes the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area. Public lands consist of relatively small blocks and parcels with most of the land in private ownership and being farmed. Much of the Willow Creek Canyon is public land. The soil erosion taking place is a result of farming practices and the area has been rated as one of the top ten areas needing soil and water protection in the United States. BLM is a cooperator in the SCS 208 Project as well as the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: 11,490 acres.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: No acres were classified as limited use.
  - c. Classified as Transfer: No acres were classified for transfer.
2. Retain 11,490 acres of public land for long term multiple use management.
3. Manage about 38,120 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development, primarily oil and gas.
4. Manage about 10,676 acres for livestock grazing to maintain present 92% good range condition and to support Tex Creek wildlife program.
5. Maintain or improve high quality big game winter range in support of Tex Creek agreement. Provide rehabilitation on about 700 acres disturbed by farming operations.
6. Maintain good to excellent riparian vegetation on 8 miles and improve 1 mile of Willow Creek. Maintain good to excellent condition on 7 miles Gray's Lake Outlet, 1.6 miles on Tex Creek and 1.8 miles on Hell Creek in support of the 208 project.
7. Manage recreation resources to provide 8,290 acres for ORV use, seasonal ORV closures on 3,355 acres and close 3,200 acres to ORV use. A total of 6,485 acres is designated as semi-primitive non-motorized in this resource management plan.
8. Manage 11,490 acres as full fire suppression.
9. Manage cultural resources for management and potential scientific uses.

### Management Decisions

1. Land examinations will be made on private and state exchange proposals as they arise to support the Willow Creek 208 Project.
2. Management of the mineral estate in this management area will continue as under the present situation. No new management decisions are needed.

3. Timber sales can be conducted on 118 acres adjacent to the Caribou NF, by the select cut method and 91 acres of woodland are available for timber management. Sales will be scheduled to meet local and regional demand.
4. Reductions in the level of grazing use will be made in 6 of the 13 allotments in this management area. The initial level of grazing will total 1,790 AUMs, which is less than both the preference (1,935) and the 5 year average (1,833 AUMs). There are two miles of fence proposed in the area.
5. Management of the wildlife habitat will be in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding for the Tex Creek wildlife program. About 700 acres of land disturbed by farming operations will be rehabilitated, 20 acres seeded to bitterbrush and 10 acres of aspen treatment.
6. Two miles of fence are needed to improve 1 mile of stream for riparian and water quality values. An additional 15 miles of stream will be managed to improve riparian habitat and water quality while 3.4 miles of stream will be managed to maintain existing riparian, fisheries and water quality in satisfactory condition. Management decisions will complement the Willow Creek 208 Watershed Project.
7. About 3,200 acres of public land will be closed to ORV use and an additional 3,355 acres closed during winter and spring to protect wildlife and watershed values. About 6,485 acres are designated as semi-primitive non-motorized. One campground can be developed at Kepps Crossing.

## Management Area 9 Snake River

This management area contains 15,352 acres of public land along the South Fork, main stem and Henry's Fork of the Snake River. This is a complex area with demands from many resource users. Recreation, wildlife, fisheries, water, and grazing are some of the important uses which occur in the area.

### Management Objectives

1. Multiple Use and Transfer Classes
  - a. Classified as Moderate Use: No acres were classified as moderate use.
  - b. Classified as Limited Use: 14,866 acres, all public lands within the Snake River corridor.
  - c. Classified for Transfer: 486 acres classified for sale or exchange.
2. Maintain a public land base of 14,866 acres for long term management in federal ownership.
3. Manage 20,800 acres of federal mineral estate for mineral exploration and development in a manner consistent with recreation and wildlife uses.
4. Intensively manage 364 acres for timber production.

5. Manage 10,333 acres for livestock grazing in support of wildlife and recreation, improve livestock distribution along the river and improve range condition in the Kelly Canyon/Stinking Springs area from fair to good on 400 acres.
6. Maintain high quality riparian habitat, provide critical nesting and wintering areas for bald eagles, maintain high quality big game winter range and improve about 70 acres of unsatisfactory big game habitat.
7. Manage the recreation values and uses of the area as a Special Recreation Management Area with a comprehensive management plan that recognizes other resource values and uses.
8. Manage one mile of Kelly Canyon to improve water quality from poor to good. Reduce man-caused erosion to not more than 2 1/2 tons per acre.
9. All of the management area would be handled as a restricted fire suppression area. No heavy equipment and no fire retardant will be used. Fire control will be done in a manner to protect natural systems, erodible soils and scenic quality.
10. Manage cultural resources for sociocultural, management and potential scientific uses.

#### Management Decisions

1. Land examinations will be completed for 486 acres for sale or exchange. Land examinations will be completed for feasible state or private exchanges as these opportunities arise.
2. Mineral management decisions are designed to complement important wildlife and recreation uses in this management area. About 10,400 acres will be closed to mining claim location where 3,000 acres are currently closed. No change in management of salable minerals is needed. About 13,600 acres remain available for material sales and 7,200 acres remain closed to sales.
3. Timber sales can be designed on 364 acres in the Conant Valley and Kelley Canyon areas using select cut methods. About 352 acres are withdrawn from the commercial forest base for bald eagle nesting and wintering and other multiple uses. The 2,925 acres of cottonwood along the river are withdrawn from timber management because of high values for bald eagle nesting and wintering, wildlife and recreation. Periodic monitoring will be needed to prevent unauthorized cutting of firewood.
4. Of the 48 allotments under Section 15 lease, reductions in the level of grazing use will be made in four. Most of the allotments are small, isolated parcels of less than 50 acres. About 400 acres of seeding are proposed, 2 springs, 1 mile of pipeline, and 10 miles of fence.

5. Wildlife habitat will be managed in accordance with the South Fork of the Snake River Memorandum of Understanding and the Pacific States Bald Eagle Recovery Plan. A management plan for the Snake River ACEC (see below) will be in accordance with these and will be implemented on completion. About 20 goose nesting platforms, 200 acres of bitterbrush seeding and 10 acres of aspen treatment are proposed.
6. One mile on the lower end of Kelly Canyon will be managed to improve water quality and 1 mile managed to maintain existing satisfactory riparian habitat and water quality. The improvement will be through grazing management and reseeding of eroded areas. ORV use will be controlled to further improve water quality.
7. Man-caused soil erosion will be reduced to not more than 2 1/2 tons/acre/year through seeding, ORV management and grazing management.
8. About 1,191 acres will be managed for general ORV use while the balance of the area will be either closed to ORVs (6,020 acres) or restricted to existing roads and trails. About 8,320 acres of the area will be managed as semi-primitive non-motorized. A management plan for the Snake River Special Recreation Management Area will be developed to manage the recreation values and uses. If feasible, a single management plan including both the Snake River SRMA and Snake River ACEC will be completed rather than separate plans for the same area. This plan will provide for more detailed management of all public land resources including cultural and historical values.
9. Public lands along the South Fork of the Snake River from Palisades Dam to the confluence with the Henry's Fork, will be given special management consideration. Presidential and other directives have given land managing agencies instructions to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on potential additions to the National Rivers System. Management attention along the South Fork will focus on this objective.
10. Special designations for this management area include the following:
  - a. North Menan Butte ACEC, 1,120 acres
  - b. Snake River ACEC, 11,120 acres
  - c. Snake River SRMA, 14,759 acres
  - d. North Menan Butte Research Natural Area
  - e. Menan Butte National Natural Landmark, 1,120 acres (currently in effect)
  - f. Cress Creek National Recreation Trail, 1 mile
  - g. South Fork of the Snake River recommended for further study as a recreation or scenic river, 61 miles

Constraints that apply to the North Menan Butte ACEC include no surface occupancy for oil and gas operations, the area will be closed to grazing, ORV, and mining under the 1872 law. No changes in the vegetation will be allowed in the North Menan Butte RNA, or in the 3 Snake River islands.

Constraints on uses of the Snake River ACEC and Snake River SRMA are itemized in these management decisions for the management area.

11. Cultural and historic resources and values will be managed under the ACEC management plan.
12. Fire suppression activities will be conducted using no fire retardant or heavy equipment unless management decides natural systems and values could be adequately protected.
13. If the Snake River Islands WSA is not designated wilderness, the islands will be managed as part of an ACEC and a SRMA. Detailed management plans will be developed for areas within the Snake River System. Other management prescriptions are listed in items 1-11 above.

If the islands are designated wilderness they will be managed under BLM's Wilderness Management Policy. Specific management provisions will be formulated in a wilderness management plan developed for the islands.